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SC PUTS OFF SCIENTIFIC SURVEY TO DETERMINE GYANVAPI 'SHIVLING' AGE

The Supreme Court on Friday said implications of the Allahabad High Court order for carbon dating of the Shivling-like structure merit closer scrutiny

CENTRE, U.P. GOVT AGREE TO ADJOURN STUDY

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and judges P S Narasimha and K V Vishwanathan, issued notices to the Centre, the Uttar Pradesh government and the Hindu petitioners on the plea of the Anjuman Islamia Masjid committee against the HC order for scientific survey. Both the Centre and the UP govt agreed to the plea for adjourning the proposed survey for now

CALL FOR ALTERNATIVE TO CARBON DATING

- Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for UP govt, expressed concerns regarding damage to the structure during the process. He said the govt will examine in consultation with the Archaeological Survey of India if there is an alternative method to ascertain the age of the 'Shivling'
- The high court order had said the structure should be unharmed

May 22

WHEN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA'S SCIENTIFIC SURVEY WAS SLATED TO BEGIN

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

RBI DECIDES TO WITHDRAW THE NOTES FROM CIRCULATION; THEY CAN BE EXCHANGED AT ANY BANK COUNTER TILL SEPTEMBER 30

EXCHANGE FACILITY STARTS ON MAY 23; ONLY 10 ₹2,000 NOTES CAN BE EXCHANGED AT A TIME

SURGICAL STRIKE ON ₹2,000 NOTES

FIGURINGITOUT

NOTES TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN LEGAL STATUS

All banks shall discontinue issue of ₹2,000 denomination banknotes with immediate effect. ATMs may also be reconfigured accordingly. However, these notes will continue to be legal tender and can be used for transaction, payments etc even after September 30. Banks will also continue to accept ₹2,000 notes in deposit after September 30

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

In order to avoid the kind of chaos witnessed after the 2016 demonetisation, RBI has instructed banks to make arrangements to reduce inconvenience to the senior citizens, persons with disabilities etc, seeking exchange or deposit of ₹2,000 banknotes

WILL RBI EXTEND THE SEPT 30 DEADLINE?

Experts believe RBI is now trying to put pressure on the public to expend the high-value banknotes; it is likely to extend the date

SACHIN KUMAR @ Mumbai

THE Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday announced the withdrawal of ₹2,000 denomination banknotes from circulation. However, the central bank clarified that the high-value notes will continue to be a legal tender. In other words, the public can continue to use these notes for transactions.

The surprise announcement came as a shocker to many, reviving memories of the hardships the public had to face when the Centre announced demonetisation in November 2016 and decided to scrap ₹500 and ₹1,000 currency notes overnight.

This time, however, the authorities are confident there won't be any chaos as the ₹2,000 banknote will continue to remain in use.

The central bank has asked people to exchange the high-value notes into other denominations or deposit them with banks until September 30 at any bank branch. Banks will start exchanging these notes from May 23.

"Members of the public can continue to use ₹2,000 banknotes for their transactions and also receive them in payment. However, they are encouraged to deposit and/or exchange these banknotes on or before 30 September 2023," RBI said in a note.

RBI started printing ₹2,000 notes in November 2016 after the ₹1,000 and ₹500 notes were scrapped overnight.

Explaining the rationale behind the decision, the central bank said the objective of introducing ₹2,000 banknotes was met once banknotes in other denominations became available in adequate quantities. Therefore, printing of ₹2,000 banknotes was stopped in 2018-19. It has also been observed that this denomination is not commonly used for transactions.

"About 89% of the ₹2,000 denomination notes were issued prior to March 2017 and are at the end of their estimated lifespan of 4-5 years," said RBI. "Total value of these banknotes in circulation has declined from ₹6.73 lakh crore at its peak as on March 31, 2018 (37.3% of notes in circulation) to ₹3.62 lakh crore constituting only 10.8% of notes in circulation on March 31, 2023," it added.

People can deposit ₹2,000 banknotes into their bank accounts or exchange them for banknotes of other denominations at any bank branch. In order to ensure smooth operations and to avoid disruption of regular activities of bank branches, exchange of ₹2,000 banknotes into banknotes of other denominations can be made up to a limit of ₹20,000.

A person can approach any bank branch to exchange notes irrespective of the fact whether he or she has an account in that bank or not and can exchange ₹2,000 notes up to a limit of ₹20,000 at a time.

SC panel gives clean chit to Adani

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

THE six-member expert panel set up by the Supreme Court has given a clean chit to the Adani group saying based on the information Sebi has provided, it has found no evidence of stock price manipulation. The panel's report, released on Friday, has also ruled out any regulatory failure by Sebi.

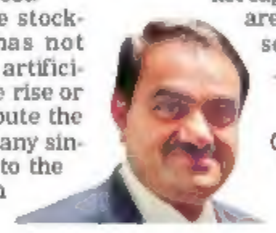
The report says the stock-markets regulator has not found any evidence of artificiality in the stock price rise or any material to attribute the rally in stock prices to any single entity. According to the report, the contribution of 'suspected' foreign portfolio investors, 13 in total, referred to in the Hindenburg Research report is minuscule in the rise of the stock prices of six listed Adani group companies.

The findings of the panel come as a big relief for embattled billionaire Gautam Adani, whose group companies have lost about $120 billion in market capitalisation and are under heavy scrutiny after US-based short seller Hindenburg Research accused the port-to-power conglomerate of pulling the "largest con in corporate history" by engaging in "brazen stock manipulation and accounting fraud".

The Adanis have always denied the allegations and any wrongdoings.

However, the SC-appointed panel's report notes there was evidence of a build-up in short positions on Adani group stocks ahead of the Hindenburg report, published on January 24. The report claims profits were earned from squaring off positions after prices crashed post-publication of the damning allegations.

The panel, however, also drew some red flags. It said that while Sebi suspected 13 overseas entities of having alleged links with the promoters of Adani group, it could not gather any concrete evidence from regulators in other jurisdictions. Most of the FPIs, who invested heavily in Adani, are registered in offshore tax havens such as Cayman Islands, Malta, British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, etc.



DOESN'T FIND REGULATORY FAILURE

On the functioning of Sebi, the panel said based on the explanations provided by the watchdog, supported by empirical data, it does not see any regulatory failure around the allegation of price manipulation

28 MLAs to take oath as mins along with Siddu & DKS today

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI & PREETHA NAIR @ Bengaluru / New Delhi

CHIEF Minister-designate and Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister-designate and KPCC president DK Shivakumar will be sworn in along with 28 ministers at Sri Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru at 12.30 pm on Saturday.

After days of hectic parleys with Congress high command in New Delhi over deciding on who between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar would be the new CM and reaching a decision on Thursday morning, Friday saw the two leaders back in the national capital to work out cabinet formation modalities.

Siddaramaiah — who has presented 13 budgets — is likely to keep the Finance and Personnel & Administrative Reforms portfolios, while Shivakumar vying for Home along with State Intelligence portfolios may settle for Water Resources and Energy, according to sources privy to the meetings.

It is learnt that the two leaders started shortlisting the names of probable ministers as soon as their flight took off from Bengaluru for New Delhi on Friday afternoon. The lists prepared by them were later presented to AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge at a closed door meeting, also attended by AICC general secretary (in-charge of Karnataka) Randeep Singh Surjewala and AICC general secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal.

Former ministers KJ George, Ramalinga Reddy and Krishna Byregowda from Bengaluru urban district are confirmed to get cabinet berths. Differences arose over inclusion of NA Harris and Zameer Ahmed Khan till late night when this paper went to press.

Former chief minister Jagadish Shettar, who switched from BJP to Congress ahead of polls in which he lost from Hubballi-Dharwad Central constituency, is also said to be considered, while another BJP turncoat Laxman Savadi, too, is likely to make the cut. Savadi won on Congress ticket from Athani.

Former ministers MB Patil, Dr G Parameshwara, Priyank Kharge, Eshwar Khandre, UT Khader, Satish Jarkiholi, among others, are likely to be sworn in. Former Union minister KH Muniyappa or his daughter Roopakala Shashidhar may also be included in the cabinet. MORE ON: P2, P4

Congress leaders Priyanka Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi with CM-elect Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM-elect DK Shivakumar in New Delhi on Friday

ALL EYES ON FIRST CABINET MEETING

Bengaluru: With senior Congress leaders Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar all set to take oath as CM and Deputy CM, respectively, on Saturday, all eyes are on the first cabinet meeting to be held soon after the swearing-in ceremony. The new government is expected to announce the implementation of Congress party's five guarantees. Deputy CM-designate Shivakumar on Friday said the guarantees promised by the Congress party will be implemented. P4

Swearing-in ceremony casts shadow on KCET

DONNA EVA @ Bengaluru

IN view of the swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected chief minister and deputy CM in the city on Saturday, measures have been taken to ensure that students appearing for the Karnataka Common Entrance Test (KCET) are not affected.

KCET will be held on Saturday and Sunday in two sessions – from 10.30 am to 11.50 am and from 2.30 pm to 3.50 pm. It will take place in 592 centres across the state, with 121 in Bengaluru. Of the 121 centres, 11 are in the vicinity of Sri Kanteerava Stadium where the ceremony will be held at 12.30 pm.

Several measures have been taken by Bengaluru City Police, Bengaluru Traffic Police and Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA) to ensure that students appearing for KCET are not affected.

KEA has advised students to reach the centres near the stadium around 8.30 am to ensure that they are not stuck in traffic.

"The authority has taken appropriate measures to ensure students reach the centres without any delay owing to the oath-taking ceremony on Saturday. Students should be present at their respective centres by 8.30 am. This applies to students who appear for the Mathematics paper also," said Ramya S, KEA Executive Director.

Ramya said students may take police assistance to reach their centres by showing their admission cards.

Meanwhile, students appearing for KCET at St Joseph's Indian PU College, Vittal Mallya Road, which is near the stadium, will be served breakfast and lunch at the centre. As a precautionary measure, Bengaluru Traffic Police have advised students who write the test in the afternoon to use Vittal Mallya Road and St Marks Road and enter the college premises through the UB City entrance.

A similar situation prevailed during the conduct of NEET on May 7. Students had complained of NEET clashing with Prime Minister Modi's rally on the same day. Several measures were taken to ensure that the students were not affected by the rally. P2

REACH THESE CENTRES BY 8.30 AM

- Bishop Cotton Women's PU College (DU- code)
- Goodwill PU College for girls (AD-code)
- St. Joseph's PU College (AE-code)
- St.Joseph Indian PU College (AR-code)
- St. Annes Girls' PU College (BQ-code)
- RBANMS PU College (CM-code)
- SJRC BIFR PU College (CL- code)
- Cathedral Comp PU College (EN-code)
- St. Euphrasias Girls' HS & Composite PU College (EZ- code)
- Stracey Memorial Composite PU College (BZ-code)
- Hasanath PU College for Women (P2-code)

WARM WELCOME

Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by the Indian diaspora in Japan's Hiroshima city on Friday upon his arrival for the G7 Summit | PTI | P9

EXPRESS READ

After revaluation, Ballari lad tops II PU

Bengaluru: A revaluation process has switched the top two ranks in the Arts stream of II PU examinations. Second-ranked Kushunaik GL from Ballari, son of sugarcane harvesters, has now outranked Tabassum Shaik, who was the topper. Tabassum from NMKRV PU College for Women in Bengaluru was initially the topper with a score of 593/ 600. P2

NIA arrests 2 aides of terrorist from Delhi

New Delhi: The NIA on Friday arrested two close associates of Canada-based listed terrorist Arsh Dhalla when they arrived at the Delhi airport from the Philippines. Amritpal Singh alias 'Ammy' and Amritk Singh, both from Punjab, were nabbed early this morning on their arrival from Manila, a spokesperson of the NIA said.

EXTORTION CHARGE COUNTER

Wankhede reveals SRK's messages

SUDHIR SURAYWANSHI @ Mumbai

FORMER Narcotics Control Bureau zonal officer Sameer Wankhede, who is under a cloud for his alleged attempt to extort ₹25 crore from Shah Rukh Khan in exchange for the release of his son Aryan in a drugs case, on Friday shared his WhatsApp chat messages with the Bollywood star in 2021 to try and clear his name.

Purported transcripts of their conversation were part of the affidavit he filed in the Bombay High Court. The petition claims SRK's text messages "clearly portrayed that he has no grievances against the petitioner and has only requested to be kind to his son (Aryan) Khan."

After Aryan's arrest, SRK had messaged Wankhede saying, "You are a good man. Please be kind to my son. My son will break as a human being. I can only plead and beg you as a father. Please. You promised you will reform my child. I would never stand in front of what you are doing. I have just believe in your goodness." Excerpts from the texts:

SRK: Sameer sahib may I speak with you for a minute please. Regards shah rukh khan. I know this is officially inappropriate and maybe outright wrong but once as a father if I can speak with you. please.

Sameer: Pl call.

SRK: Can't thank you enough for all the thoughts and personal insights you gave to me about my own. I will make sure that he turns out to be someone that you and I are both proud of. This incident will prove to be a turning point in his life I promise, in a good way. This country needs honest and hardworking young people to take it forward. You and I have done our PARTS THE NEXT GENERATION HAS TO FOLLOW...

SRK: Thank you. You are a good man. Please be kind to him today I request.

Sameer: Of course don't worry

SRK: God bless you. I have to come personally whenever you say and give a hug... I have always had the highest regard for your uprightness and now it has increased manifolds...

Dr Bhujang Shetty passes away at 69

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

RENOWNED ophthalmologist **Dr K Bhujang Shetty**, chairman of Narayana Nethralaya, passed away at his residence in Bengaluru on Friday evening. He was 69.

He suffered a massive heart attack.

According to sources, Dr Shetty, who returned home from work, spent some time working out in his gym. After his gym session, he suffered a cardiac arrest and passed away.

Dr Shetty played a pivotal role in the field of eye donation in Karnataka.